

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14292 01 OF 02 211233Z

63

ACTION EUR-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USIA WASHDC

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USNATO

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 14292

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET CAMPAIGN ON DANGERS OF BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

USIA FOR IBS, IEE, IPS

1. SUMMARY. THE SOVIET PRESS HAS DEVOTED A GREAT DEAL OF COVERAGE DURING SEPTEMBER TO AN IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN, WHICH, THOUGH ITSELF NOT UNUSUAL THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, APPEARS TO BE PLACING MORE EMPHASIS THAN USUAL ON THE DANGERS OF BOURGEOIS IDEOLOGY. THE CAPAIGN HAS BEEN QUITE DEFENSIVE IN TONE, AND HAS KEPT ENTIRELY AWAY
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 14292 01 OF 02 211233Z

FROM THE POSITIVE APPROACH TO IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION

WITH THE WEST WHICH BREZHNEV TOOK AT ALMA ATA A YEAR AGO. THE TREND AWAY FROM THE ALMA ATA POSITION STARTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER ALMA ATA ITSELF, AND NOW SEEMS TO HAVE COME FULL CIRCLE TO RELIANCE ON THE MORE TRADITIONAL CRITICISM OF THE CAPITALIST WORLD ACCOMPANIED BY WARNINGS OF THE DANGER OF CONTACT WITH IT. THIS MORE DEFENSIVE STANCE SEEMS INTENDED PRIMARILY TO KEEP UP VIGILANCE AT HOME, BUT IT CAN ALSO BE READ AS A WARNING TO THE WEST NOT TO PRESS, AT CSCE AND ELSEWHERE, THE HUMAN CONTACTS ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PRESS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS HAS DEVOTED A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION TO IDEOLOGICAL BELT-TIGHTENING. TO A CERTAIN EXTENT THIS HAS BEEN KEYED TO THE OPENING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR AND THE USUAL EXHORTATIONS TO PARTY ORGANIZATIONS TO DO A BETTER JOB IN IDEOLOGICAL WORK, A PRIMARY FOCUS OF BREZHNEV'S SPEECH IN ALMA ATA A YEAR AGO. THE RECENT CAMPAIGN SEEMS TO US, HOWEVER, TO REFLECT GREATER CONCERN WITH IDEOLOGICAL CONFORMITY THAN PREVIOUSLY, APPREHENSION ABOUT POSSIBLE LOOSENING OF CONTROLS AND PERCEPTION THAT DETENTE MAY BE HAVING SOME DANGEROUS EFFECTS ON THE POPULACE.

3. THE OPENING SHOT IN THE CAMPAIGN WAS THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTION PUBLISHED IN NEARLY ALL PAPERS ON AUGUST 31 "ON THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF IDEOLOGICAL CADRES IN THE BELORUSSIAN PARTY ORGANIZATION." THAT RESOLUTION, WHILE NOMINALLY CENTERED ON THE BELORUSSIAN SITUATION, WAS CLEARLY DIRECTED AT PARTY ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. IT SET FORTH AN ACTION PROGRAM FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF IDEOLOGICAL WORK BY LOCAL PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AND A BROAD RANGE OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND PRACTICAL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THIS IMPROVEMENT. ITS EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPING OF "UNCOMPROMISING" ATTITUDES TOWARD BOURGEOIS AND REVISIONIST IDEOLOGY HAS BEEN REPLAYED AT A RECENT, WELL-PUBLICIZED WRITERS UNION MEETING, IN A RESOLUTION BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ON THE "COMMUNIST UPBRINGING" OF CHILDREN, AND IN NUMEROUS PROMINENTLY PLACED EDITORIALS. THE MAIN MESSAGE

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 14292 01 OF 02 211233Z

IMPARTED IS THAT UNDER CONDITIONS OF DETENTE THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE WITH THE WEST WILL BROADEN AND INTENSIFY-- HENCE THE NEED FOR GREATER VIGILANCE AND ATTENTION TO IDEOLOGICAL WORK WITH THE MASSES.

4. THE CAMPAIGN HAS ALSO HAD ITS EFFECT IN PRESS DISCUSSION OF DETENTE AND RELATIONS WITH THE WEST. IZVESTIYA ON SEPTEMBER 16 AND KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ON

SEPTEMBER 17 PUBLISHED STRONG WARNINGS AGAINST
IDEOLOGICAL COMPLACENCY DURING THE ERA OF DETENTE.
THE IZVESTIYA ARTICLE IS OSTENSIBLY A REVIEW BY E. BOLOTIN
OF A COMPIATION OF BREZHNEV SPEECHES. BREZHNEV'S BOOK,
ACCORDING TO BOLOTIN, EXPOSES THE SPECIAL NATURE
OF THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IN AN ERA OF DETENTE.
IT WARNS AGAINST ANY UNDERESTIMATION OF BOURGEOIS
IDEOLOGY AND REVISION, FOR BOTH ARE FERTILE SOIL FOR
THE "POISONOUS SEEDS" OF IDEOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTY.
COMMUNISTS MUST BE IDEOLOGICALLY FIRM AND "UNCOMPROMISING"
TOWARD ANY VESTIGES OF THE OLD (I.E., THE BOURGEOIS) WORLD.

5. THE KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ARTICLE, BY YU. NALIN, DETAILS
THE PROPAGANDA EFFORT OF THE WEST, AND EXPLAINS THAT,
IN ORDER TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM ITS OWN
INCREASING MISERIES, THE CAPITALIST WORLD IS ATTEMPTING
TO DISCREDIT THE SOVIET UNION AND SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.
THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT DURING THE ERA OF DETENTE
THE IDEOLOGICAL FRONT IS "ONE OF THE MOST BURDENED
AND MOST ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN
CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM," AND THAT BECAUSE OF THIS
"EVEN MORE EFFORT SHOULD BE EXPENDED IN EXPOSING AND
SUPPRESSING IMPERIALIST IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL
DIVERSIONS."

6. A COMPARISON OF EITHER ARTICLE WITH THE PRAVDA LEADER
OF SEPTEMBER 18, 1973, WHICH COMMENTED ON THE SAME
GENERAL SUBJECT, SHOWS THIS YEAR'S COMMENTS TO HAVE A

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14292 02 OF 02 211239Z

63

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 14292

CONSIDERABLY MORE DEFENSIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE DANGERS OF THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE. THE 1973 COMMENTARY, BASKING TO SOME DEGREE IN THE REFLECTED CONFIDENCE OF BREZHNEV'S ALMA ATA SPEECH ON THE ABILITY OF THE SOCIALIST WORLD TO HOLD ITS OWN IN IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION, SPOKE GLOWINGLY OF THE FORCE OF SOCIALIST EXAMPLE AND ADVOCATED COMBATING IDEOLOGICAL DIVERSIONS BY EMPHASIZING THE POSITIVE IN SOVIET LIFE. IT EVEN SPOKE IN FAVORABLE TERMS OF THE "EVER WIDENING EXCHANGE OF SPIRITUAL VALUES BETWEEN PEOPLES." THIS YEAR'S COMMENTS STAY WILL AWAY FROM ANY DISCUSSION OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND DEVOTE THEIR EFFORTS TO STRAIGHTFORWARD WARNINGS ON THE INFLUENCE OF BOURGEOIS
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 14292 02 OF 02 211239Z

IDEOLOGY.

7. PARALLEL WITH THE IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN, THE WEST -- AND PARTICULARLY THE U.S.--IS RECEIVING SOMEWHAT STIFFER TREATMENT IN THE PRESS, THOUGH PERHAPS NO MORE SO THAN AT THIS TIME LAST YEAR. WHILE THE COVERAGE IS TYPICALLY NOT TIED TO IDEOLOGY (E.G., UNFLATTERING PORTRAYALS OF U.S. DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN POLICY), A RECENT ARTICLE IN SOVIETSKAYA KULTURA (SEPTEMBER 10) DID HAVE A POINTEDLY IDEOLOGICAL SLANT TO ITS ATTACK ON U.S. LITERATURE. THE ARTICLE CONTENDED THAT BOURGEOIS LITERATURE (USING AMERICAN EXAMPLES) "IS DEFAMING HUMANITARIAN IDEALS WHILE SOVIET ART CARRIES THEM PROUDLY FORWARD."

8. IN REPORTING ON THE PRAVDA SEPTEMBER 18, 1973 LEADER REFERRED TO ABOVE, THE EMBASSY COMMENTED THAT SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS WERE ALREADY PLACING "MORE EMPHASIS ON THE DANGERS OF IDEOLOGICAL SUBVERSION FROM THE WEST THAN ON THE STRENGTH OF SOCIALISTS IDEAS IN

THE BATTLE FOR MINDS." SEEN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE
OF THE SEPTEMBER 16 IZVESTIYA AND SEPTEMBER 17
KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ARTICLES OF THIS YEAR, HOWEVER,
THE 1973 PIECE IS STRIKING IN THE EMPAHSIS -- THOUGH ALREADY
REDUCED FROM ALMA ATA -- IT PLACED ON COMMUNIST
IDEOLOGY'S ABILITY TO COMPETE IN THE INTERNATIONAL
CONTEXT. THERE IS LITTLE SIGN OF THAT CONFIDENT
APPROACH IN TODAY'S PRESS. SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS ARE
REVERTING TO THE TRIED AND TRUE METHOD OF DISCREDITING
THE CAPITALIST WORLD, DISCOURAGING CONTACT WITH
IT, AND SHYING AWAY FROM DIRECT IDEOLOGICAL COMPETITION.
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